

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMCONSUL STUTTGART

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2831

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HMABURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

HQUSEUCOM VAIHINGEN

HQUSAREUR HEIDELBERG

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FOR POLADS

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT GW

SUBJ: BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN "HOT PHASE"

REF: STUTTGART 317

1. SUMMARY: BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG CAMPAIGN FOR APRIL 4 LANDTAG  
ELECTIONS ENTERS "HOT PHASE". SCHMIDT, BRANDT, KOHL, AND  
STRAUSS LEAD INVASION OF NATIONAL POLITICAL FIGURES. VOTERS  
OFFERED CHOICE BETWEEN SHARPLY CONTRASTING STYLES AND PER-  
SONALITIES OF BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG CDU MINISTER PRESIDENT  
FILBINGER AND BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG SPD LEADER EPPLER. LATTER  
STRESSES "TIME FOR A CHANGE" APPROACH, WHEREAS FILBINGER  
APPEARS TO BE MAKING A CONCERTED EFFORT TO CONVEY PICTURE

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OF COMPLETE GEMUETLICHKEIT" EXISTING IN LAND CONTRASTING

WITH SPECTRE OF COMMUNISM. NATIONAL AND FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES PLAY ONLY MARGINAL ROLE THUS FAR. COMMUNIST GROUPS CREATE DISTURBANCES AND CAUSE SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT AT FREIBURG. PRELIMINARY PROGNOSIS AND POLLS SUGGEST CDU MAY EQUAL OR EVEN SURPASS THE 53 PERCENT IT WON IN 1972 LANDTAG ELECTIONS WHEREAS SPD MAY DROP TWO OR THREE PERCENTAGE POINTS BELOW ITS 37.5 PERCENT WITH THE FDP ADDING ONE OR TWO POINTS TO ITS 8.9 PERCENT. END SUMMARY.

2. CAMPAIGN FOR BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG APRIL 4 LANDTAG ELECTIONS LAST WEEKEND ENTERED FINAL MONTH WHICH TRADITIONALLY CALLED "HOT PHASE". SPD CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT AND PARTY CHAIRMAN BRANDT JOINED BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG SPD CHAIRMAN ERHARD EPPLER SPEAKING TO ESTIMATED 10,000 PERSONS IN STUTTGART MARKET PLACE, CDU/CSU CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE HELMUT KOHL ACCOMPANIED CDU LAND CHAIRMAN FILBINGER TO FREIBURG, CSU CHAIRMAN STRAUSS ADDRESSED LARGE CROWD IN MANNHEIM, AND CDU SECRETARY GENERAL BIEDENKOPF FEATURED SPEAKER AT ELECTION GATHERING IN LUDWIGSBURG.

3. DIFFERING STYLES AND PERSONALITIES OF OPPOSING CANDIDATES FILBINGER AND EPPLER CONTINUE TO PLAY IMPORTANT ROLES IN ELECTIONEERING. FAMILIAR FILBINGER "FATHER IMAGE" UNDER ATTACK BY SPD AND EPPLER WHO IS BEING PORTRAYED AS SERIOUS, HARD WORKING, HONEST POLITICIAN WITH ONLY THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE AT HEART. EACH MAJOR COMPETITOR ACCUSING THE OTHER OF TREATING THE TRUTH MUCH TOO LIGHTLY, AND SPD HAS EVEN FILED SUIT AGAINST CDU BECAUSE OF ALLEGED SLANDER. FILBINGER AND CDU ALSO CHARGED WITH THINKING AND ACTING AS THOUGH THEY ARE SYNONYMOUS WITH GOVERNMENT OF BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG.

4. COMMUNISTS AND LEFTIST GROUPS IN EVIDENCE AT ELECTION RALLIES. CAUSED HARDLY A RIPPLE AT SCHMIDT-BRANDT STUTTGART GATHERING, AND HEAVY SECURITY AT STRAUSS MANNHEIM APPEARANCE KEPT SITUATION WELL IN HAND. KOHL-FILBINGER APPEARANCE AT FREIBURG, HOWEVER, MARRED BY COMMUNIST-CAUSED INCIDENT IN WHICH THREE DEMONSTRATORS ARRESTED AND 10-12 PEOPLE (INCLUDING SOME POLICE) WERE INJURED, TWO REQUIRING HOSPITALIZATION AS RESULT OF MELEES. LOCAL POLICE CONTACTS DO NOT REGARD THESE ATTEMPTS AS OVERLY SERIOUS, BUT THEY MAY SIGNAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A CONCERTED DISSIDENT LEFTIST EFFORT TO MAKE WAVES. FREIBURG MAY HAVE BEEN CHOSEN AS SITE FOR SERIOUS DISRUPTIVE EFFORT FOR VARIOUS REASONS. RADICAL ELEMENTS OF UNIVERSITY POPULATION ABLE TO PROVIDE SOME SUPPORT. PART OF FREIBURG IS ALSO FILBINGER CONSTITUENCY AND IS LOCATED NEAR SITE OF STILL SMOLDERING CONTROVERSY OVER CONSTRUCTION OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AT WYHL. FURTHER DISTURBANCES AT POLITICAL MEETINGS WILL ULTIMATELY WORK TO ADVANTAGE OF CDU WHICH HAS TAKEN

CONSISTENTLY HARD LINE AGAINST RADICALS.

5. CURRENT BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG ELECTION CAMPAIGN ALSO MUST BE SEEN IN CONTEXT OF UPCOMING OCTOBER 3 NATIONAL ELECTIONS. DESPITE PLEAS TO BREAK THE PRESENT CDU ABSOLUTE LAND MAJORITY, BOTH BRANDT AND SCHMIDT CLEARLY LOOKING DOWN THE PIKE TOWARD OCTOBER AND PLACED GREATER EMPHASIS ON OVERALL SPD PERFORMANCE AND PROSPECTS RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON MORE SPECIFIC LAND ISSUES. NO PARTY, HOWEVER, YET REFERS DIRECTLY TO BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG LANDTAG ELECTION AS "TEST" NATIONAL ELECTION BUT ALL AWARE THAT SOME SIGNALS WILL BE SENT.

6. REGARDING ISSUES IN THE LAND CAMPAIGN, ALL MAJOR PARTIES SEEM TO BE CRYSTALLIZING THEIR THINKING ON A NUMBER OF MAJOR ISSUES. THESE INCLUDE STATE OF THE ECONOMY AND PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVEMENT. RELATED SUBJECTS DEAL WITH STRUCTURAL CHANGES TO BRING ABOUT BETTER JOB PROSPECTS FOR BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG YOUTH AND INCREASED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES. GOALS OF VARIOUS PARTIES DON'T DIFFER DRAMATICALLY AND ARGUMENTS ARE MOSTLY ON MEANS. OTHER ISSUES THAT HAVE CROPPED UP POINT TO A MILD CONCERN IN GENERAL OVER INFLATION AND A GREATER CONCERN OVER COST EXPLOSION IN HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE SYSTEMS. QUESTION OF DEALING WITH RADICALS IN PUBLIC SERVICE IS ALSO RECURRING THEME AND CDU/FILBINGER CULTIVATING CONSERVATIVE VOTE BY PLAYING ON THIS LATENT FEAR AND POTENTIAL FOR POLITICAL AND SOCIAL UNREST AS CONSEQUENCE OF LEFTIST IDEOLOGIES.

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 101545Z MAR 76  
FM AMCONSUL STUTTGART  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2832  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN  
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF  
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FOR POLADS

7. COMPARED TO MASSIVE CDU AND SPD CAMPAIGNS, FDP EFFORT SO FAR SEEMS ALMOST NON-EXISTENT. FDP IN ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT POSITION SINCE TOP CANDIDATE, FACTION LEADER DR. JOHANN PETER BRANDENBURG, UNABLE TO CAMPAIGN BECAUSE OF OLD AGE (71) AND ILLNESS. LAND CHAIRMAN DR. MARTIN BANGEMANN, STILL A SUBJECT OF SOME CONTROVERSY BECAUSE OF HIS TACTICAL WILLINGNESS TO FLIRT MORE OPENLY WITH CDU, IS EFFICIENT SPEAKER, BUT KNOWN TO BE UNINTERESTED IN LAND POLITICS. IT NOT SURPRISING THAT ESIMTATED FDP VOTE DROPPED FROM ABOUT 13 PERCENT TO ABOUT 10 PERCENT IN PAST FEW WEEKS. LOWER SAXONY EVENTS ALSO CASTING CLOUDS OVER FDP'S OVERALL POLITICAL FORTUNES. GENSCHER AND OTHER FEDERAL FDP LEADERS STILL EXPECTED TO COME AND THEIR PRESENCE MAY BEEF UP FDP CAMPAIGN.

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8. FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES PLAYING ONLY MARGINAL ROLE. QEUSTION OF BUNDES RATIFICATION OF POLISH TREATIES HAS BEEN INTER- JECTED BECAUSE OF ILBINGER AND LAND CDU HARD LINE. SCHMIDT ACCUSED FILBINGER OF SOWING NATIONALIST PROPAGANDA ON THIS ISSUE WHILE POINTING OUT HOW ESSENTIAL IT WAS FOR FRG TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL OF ITS NEIGHBORS. SCHMIDT ALSO TROTTED OUT ONE OF HIS FAMILIAR THEMES WHEN HE STRESSED HOW GOOD GER- MANS HAD IT TODAY AND THAT INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FACTORS WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN WHATEVER PROBLEMS MIGHT EXIST IN THE GERMAN ECONOMY. ONE ALSO HEARS OCCASIONAL COMPARISONS WITH THE UNITED STATES, POINT SOMETIMES BEING THAT GERMANS DON'T WANT TO MAKE THE SAME MISTAKES AS AMERICANS.

9. POLLS, PRESS SPECULATION, AND LOCAL POLITICAL CONTACTS SEEM PRETTY MUCH AGREED AT THIS STAGE THAT RESULTS OF APRIL 4. VOTING MAY COME CLOSE TO BEING CARBON COPY OF 1972 RESULTS WHEN CDU WON 53 PERCENT, THE SPD 37.5, AND THE FDP 8.9. TALK NOW IS OF 54 PERCENT FOR THE CDU, 34 FOR THE SPD, AND IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF 10-11 PERCENT FOR THE FDP. KEY REALLY IS CON- TINUED STRONGSHOWING OF CDU. TWO OR THREE MONTHS AGO CDU POLL INDICATED THAT IT WOULD WIN AS MUCH AS 56 PERCENT BUT

THIS SLIPPED SUDDENLY TO EXPECTATIONS OF AROUND 50 PERCENT,  
WHICH PUT A DAMPER ON OVERCONFIDENCE THAT MIGHT HAVE DEVELOPED.

10. COMMENT: BATTLE LINES BECOMING CLEARER AS CAMPAIGN ENTERS FINAL WEEKS. IF FDP HOPES TO DO AS WELL OR BETTER THAN EXPECTED, IT WILL HAVE TO GET ITS CAMPAIGN INTO HIGH GEAR. PARTY CONTINUES TO BE HURT BY CHARGES THAT VOTES FOR FDP IS A VOTE FOR EPPLER, AND CONTINUED SPECULATION OF "WHITHER THE FDP" WILL CONTINUE TO DISTRACT VOTER ATTENTION FROM FDP'S LAND ROLE. MAXIMUM HOPE THUS FAR EXPRESSED BY SPD IS TO BREAK CDU'S ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN LANDTAG WHICH CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED ONLY WITH EXCEPTIONAL FDP PERFORMANCE. SUCH DEVELOPMENT SEEMS BEYOND REACH OF EITHER OPPOSITION PARTY. FILBINGER ON OTHER HAND SEEMS CONVINCED THAT HE MUST WAGE HARD, IDEOLOGICAL, AND SOMETIMES EVEN DEMOGOGICAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE OPPOSITION. MOTIVATION MAY STEM FROM FILBINGER FEELING THAT LUKEWARM CDU VOTERS MUST BE WON OVER. HE MAY ALSO WANT TO STIR UP THE HARD CORE CDU ELEMENT TO VOTE BY GIVING THEM A SHARPLY DEFINED CHOICE BETWEEN "FREEDOM" OR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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"SOCIALISM". FILBINGER ALSO DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE AIMING AT THE OLD LIBERALS SINCE MANY OF THEM CAME ABOARD THE CDU IN 1972 AND OTHER CAMPAIGNERS SUCH AS FACTION LEADER LOTHAR SPAETH AND MAKE MORE SUBDUED POLITICAL PITCHES TO THE REMAINING LIBERALS AND OTHERS WITH A DIFFERENT APPROACH. JENKINS

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